

*THERE WAS A DEER WHOM THE CARTHEAN NYMPHS HELD SACRED*  
*Metamorphoses, Ovid*

I was a god in that body.

Out of my head grew  
a splendid rack of antlers

I bore through the high streets  
like a fine dendritic arbor.  
My beloved, Cyparissus,

strung a large pearl  
over my forelock; it bobbed  
like a globe of thought.

He rode me bareback  
or led me by a poppy bridle.  
To go about was to be loved.

I was welcome in parlors and gardens.  
Children wove me garlands  
of gardenia, bleeding heart,

and the mistletoe my darling's bow  
released from high trees.  
Mothers rocking babies on porches

offered a breast to me.  
On the day the blossoms fell,  
I lay dreaming in the grove

and was taken from this life—  
Oh the horror of my beloved's error—  
shot through like any being.